

We claim:

1. An image capturing device, comprising:

a memory storing an enable state variable and a set of enable commands;

a communications device capable of receiving an enable command and a disable command; and

a processor communicating with said memory and with said communications device, with said processor receiving an enable/disable communication from said communication device, interpreting said enable/disable communication using said set of enable commands, and setting said enable state variable in response;

wherein said image capturing device is disabled for image capturing device operations when said enable state variable is set to a disable state and is enabled when said enable state variable is set to an enable state.

2. The device of claim 1, wherein said communications device comprises

an input/output (I/O) port capable of communicating with an external device.

3. The device of claim 1, wherein said communications device comprises

a wireless receiver capable of communicating with an external device.

4. The device of claim 1, wherein said communications device comprises

a removable media interface and a removable medium plugged into said removable media interface.

5. The device of claim 4, wherein said removable medium further

comprises a removable memory medium.

6. The device of claim 4, wherein said removable medium further comprises a removable memory medium and wherein said removable memory medium comprises:

a connector for electrically connecting to said removable media interface; and

a memory communicating with said connector and storing an enable state variable;

wherein said enable state variable is loaded into said image capturing device and enables or disables said image capturing device.

7. The device of claim 6, with said memory further storing an image capturing device identifier, wherein said removable memory medium does not enable said image capturing device unless said image capturing device identifier corresponds to said image capturing device.

8. The device of claim 4, wherein said removable medium further comprises a dongle, with said dongle including circuitry that enables said image capturing device.

9. The device of claim 1, further comprising a temporary enable state variable that overrides said enable state variable when said temporary enable state variable is set to a disable state.

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10. An image capturing method for an image capturing device, comprising the steps of:

receiving a shutter command;

checking an enable state variable to see if said image capturing device is enabled; and

performing image capturing device operations if said enable state variable is set to an enable state.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising the steps of:

receiving an enable/disable command in a communication device of said image capturing device; and

toggling said enable state variable in response.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said enable/disable command is

received from an input/output (I/O) port on said image capturing device.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein said enable/disable command is

received from a wireless receiver in said image capturing device.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein said enable/disable command is

received from a removable medium plugged into a removable media interface of said image capturing device.

15. The method of claim 10, wherein said enable/disable command is

received from a rental entity.

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16. The method of claim 10, wherein said enable/disable command is received from a fixed wireless transmitter that temporarily disables said image capturing device when said image capturing device is in range of said fixed wireless transmitter.

17. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of checking a temporary enable state variable to see if said image capturing device is temporarily disabled, wherein image capturing operations are performed if said enable state variable is set to an enable state and if said temporary enable state variable is set to an enable state

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18. An image capturing method for an image capturing device, comprising the steps of:

receiving a shutter command;

checking an enable state variable to see if said image capturing device is enabled;

checking a temporary enable state variable to see if said image capturing device is temporarily disabled; and

performing image capturing device operations if said enable state variable is set to an enable state and if said temporary enable state variable is set to an enable state.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising the steps of:

receiving an enable/disable command in a communication device of said image capturing device; and

toggling said enable state variable in response.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein said enable/disable command is received from an input/output (I/O) port on said image capturing device.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein said enable/disable command is received from a wireless receiver in said image capturing device.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein said enable/disable command is received from a removable medium plugged into a removable media interface of said image capturing device.

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23. The method of claim 18, wherein said enable/disable command is received from a rental entity.

24. The method of claim 18, wherein said enable/disable command is received from a fixed wireless transmitter that temporarily disables said image capturing device when said image capturing device is in range of said fixed wireless transmitter.

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